

# Data: Body & Soul

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# Why.....

- are libraries being closed?
- are many library budgets in a constant state of cut-backs or threats of cutbacks?
- are library services hardly ever included in public policy and funding solutions for community issues?
- are librarians hardly ever invited to the table to talk about community issues?

# We don't lack data...

- NCES Annual Public Library Stats
- Public Library Data Service (PLDS)
- State Statistics
- NDP: Normative Data Process
- E-Metrics
- Individual library statistics: usage, workload factors, ROI, efficiency, customer profiles, customer satisfaction, output measures, etc.
- Fact that we have a 3 day conference on it!

# We don't lack promotions....

- Advocacy campaigns by our various national and state organizations.
- We certainly have the market penetration. More outlets than McDonalds!

# The Mind of Data

- Are we asking the right questions?
- Do we use data effectively?
- Are there other sources of data?

# *Freakonomics*

Steven Levitt:

“economics is a science with excellent tools for gaining answers but **a serious shortage of interesting questions.....we need a new way of thinking....thinking sensibly about how people behave in the real world.**”

# The Interesting Questions?

- Efficiency of a library...the perspective of librarians.
- Effectiveness of a library...the perspective of the customer.
- The role of a library, from the view of what the community values, rather than what we deliver.

# What does a community value?

- Education
- Economic Development
- Quality of Life
- Public Safety



# Do we use data effectively?

- Return On Investment (ROI)
- Comparisons and Rankings
- Avoid Paralysis of Analysis. Be selective.  
The Paradox of Choice: More is Less!

# Make it Real!

- Daily vs annual statistics: circulation, visitors, PC use
- Circulation & materials expenditures per cap.
- Comparisons they can relate to.
- Accompany them with stories that reflect the community's values....values trump data. Leave 'em with Goosebumps!

# Great American winemaking started in a library.

In 1933, Ernest and Julio Gallo needed a wine recipe to start their business. Where did they turn for help? **Their local library.**

There, they found the pamphlet "The Principles of Winemaking." They started to make wine, pursued their dream—and the rest is history.

Three generations later, Gallo wines earn worldwide acclaim as Matt and Gina Gallo carry the family dream forward.

Their small business has grown to create hundreds of jobs, thousands of opportunities and millions of satisfied customers.



## YOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY IS A SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

Public libraries continue to help entrepreneurs get their start. The investment you make in your local library helps small businesses. It also brings in additional tax dollars, raises property values and creates new jobs. In fact, studies have shown that:

**for every \$1 spent on the library,  
a community sees an average of \$4 in return.**

Who knows what Gallo success story is at your library, right now?

Go to [www.oclc.org/roi/](http://www.oclc.org/roi/)  
to learn about the  
economic impact of  
library investment.



# Use other's data

- Research on how children learn to read and brain development in first 3 years of life.
- Federal Reserve Bank in Minnesota (Art Rolnick) on long term economic impact of early childhood investments.
- Keith Curry Lance's handout *Making It Count* for PLA Smartest Card campaign is available online.
- Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS)
- Economic Development

# Reason to be Optimistic

- @your library campaigns at ALA
- ALA's strategic plan:  
“More research documenting the impact  
and value of libraries.”

*American Libraries*, November 2005

# PLA @ Your Library Advocacy & Recognition Campaign



# The Smartest Card Campaign Goals

- The library card will be the most valued and used card in every wallet.
- Funders and community leaders will value and support America's public libraries.
- **All library staff** will understand the value of the campaign and be enthusiastic supporters.

# Objectives

- Library funding will increase.
- Library use will increase in person and online.
- The number of library cardholders will increase.





# Tagline

The Smartest Card: Get it. Use it.  
*@ your library*

# Key Messages



- Public libraries are partners for vibrant and educated communities.
- Public libraries are essential for a free people.
- Public libraries are places of opportunity.

# Initial Target Groups

## Internal Audiences

- Staff
- Trustees
- Friends
- Volunteers

# Our Call-to-Action.....

*“Libraries have been around  
ever since Aristotle.....*

*it is up to librarians to market  
themselves so they don't  
disappear!”*

Business leader in focus group

# CAMPAIGN TOOLS AVAILABLE ONLINE WWW.PLA. ORG



# Next Phase



Enough with platitudes.

Move beyond testimonials by  
“influential others.”

# Advocacy based on Research!

Hired Metropolitan Group to:

- Develop a toolkit which can be adapted by local library staff to showcase the value of libraries based on demonstrated impact, research and stories.
- Provide technical assistance on engaging the library family at all levels so toolkit is used effectively.

# Use Our Own Messengers

- What better, more passionate messengers than our own staff, trustees, friends, customers.
- Armed with evidence of demonstrable impact of library services.



# PLA Planning Process

- Roles & Service Responses

What we deliver.

VS

What the community values.

- Need to build messages which bridge between what communities care about and what we deliver.
- Build a Communication Strategy (based on the PLA Service Responses) for advocacy and long term relationship building.....NOT promotions.

# Models

- Gates Foundation 2004 report: *Toward Equality of Access: The role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Digital Divide*
- WebJunction's Focus on Demonstrating Impact
- ALA's [www](#) list of Articles & Studies related to Library Value (ROI)
- Outcomes focus of LSTA grant awards
- NCLIS Health Award for Libraries
- MD's survey of perceived value of public libraries.